

# via pacis

*Newsletter of the Des Moines Catholic Worker Community*

Volume 17, Number 2

Summer 1993



Special Insert:

Report on El Salvador

NOLTE



# What's Happening

by Frank Cordaro

## In This Issue

**G**reetings! Hope our Summer issue of *via pacis* finds you well and in good spirits. In this issue of *vp* along with the regular community articles, there is a feature article by me on El Salvador. I just got back from a 12-day visit. It was an experience I will long remember.

There is also a review by Brian Terrell on the book, *New Heaven, New Earth: Practical Essays on the Catholic Worker Program* by Richard Cleaver. Be sure to read the review and buy the book!

Mike McHugh of the Catholic Peace Ministries Office has written an article for this issue. We hope that his efforts become a regular feature for the *vp*.

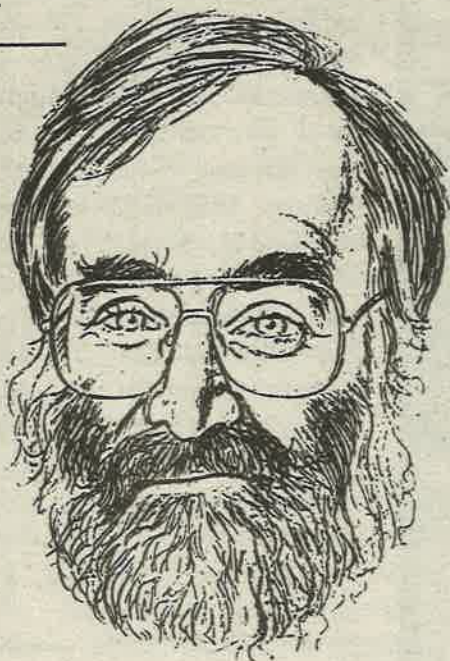
Liz Richardson, one of our BVSers has written an article about CW House neighbor Ed Fallon's scheduled bike tour of northwest Iowa in opposition to the death penalty.

## LACW Summer Intern Program

August 2 through 12, Norman Searah and I will be guests of the Los Angeles CW. For seven years now the LACW has been offering a Summer Internship Program for anyone interested in a "live in" experience of the Catholic Worker movement. The program lasts up to seven weeks.

Each week during the program, the LACW invites someone special to join the interns as a guest speaker and resident expert. Such notables as Dan and Phil Berrigan, Liz McAlister, Jim and Shelly Douglas, Brendan Walsh and Willa Bickham, Cesar Chavez, Chad Meyers, Julia Occhiogrosso, Marc Ellis, Jim Wallis, Fr. Louis Vitale, and Bishop Thomas Gumbelton have all spoken at past LACW Summer Intern Programs.

Not always able to fill the bill, sometimes less notables get invited. Such is the case this summer. Jeff Dietrich called me last month and asked if I would be willing to join



Sketch by Jim Mitchell

them as a guest speaker. I jumped at the chance.

This will be my second time as a guest speaker for the program. I joined them four years ago. It was a great time. The LACW community is known for the quality and quantity of their work. They do everything, and they do it full tilt and with great intensity. A more praying, working and partying crowd would be hard to find. This year I've asked Norman Searah to join me in L.A. We make a great team. We will give you a full report on our trip in the next *vp*.

## Aug 20-22 Lakes and Prairie Life Community Gathering

The DMCW Community will be helping to host the August 20-22 biannual gathering of LAPLC in Des Moines. The LAPLC is a regional network of nuclear resisters. We have been meeting twice a year for the last two years.

Last January, 30 people gathered in Madison, WI. Coming from Iowa, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Illinois, Missouri, South Dakota and Michigan, people there collectively represented over 30 years of jail time served. All are committed to nonviolence. We meet to net-



work and build community.

The folks who organized around the SAC Headquarters in Omaha, NE will give a brief history of their efforts and will update the gathering on the current status and mission of the Strategic Command, SAC's post-cold war replacement. There will also be efforts to invite people to a possible future witness in Omaha. More on this later.

## Thank You

A thousand thank yous to all the folks and churches who have helped support the DMCW over the last few months. Since the last issue of the *vp* the level of support has greatly increased. A special thanks to all the groups who have volunteered to bring an evening meal on a regular basis.

## Missing Issue of *vp*

I'm missing Vol 14 #4 in my collection of *vp*s. Anyone who has this back issue and is willing to part with it, please send it to us.

## Bishop Bullock Moves to Madison, WI

Bishop William Bullock has been transferred to the Madison, Wisconsin Diocese. It's very hard to know exactly why Bishop Bullock was moved. The higher-ups that determine "who becomes a Bishop and where they are to serve" operate within a very closed system. We can only wish Bishop Bullock the best and hope that he is a better Bishop for the six years he spent in the Des Moines Diocese.

We at the DMCW are hoping we find a more supportive friend in the next Bishop to be appointed to the Des Moines Diocese.

## Iowa "Call to Action" Chapter

We are getting closer to starting an Iowa Chapter of the "Call to Action." The Call to Action movement is a reform movement within the Roman Catholic Church. Among the things they are advocating for are an end to mandatory celibacy for the priesthood and an opening up of all leadership

and decision-making bodies (including the priesthood) to all people, including women and married people. They are calling for a more open process in the selection of Bishops with the local church having more say in who gets appointed to lead their diocese. They want more lay involvement in developing the church's teaching on human sexuality. They are for a more democratic spirit within the whole Church, maintaining that the people most affected by Church decisions should have the most say in such decisions.

We have already had two organizational meetings in Des Moines. We hope to get the organization going after a "yet

to be scheduled" Fall workshop and conference. More on this promising development in future *vp*s.

Life goes well for me. My summer schedule is full: a nephew's wedding, two family reunions, my trip to L.A. and helping to host the LAPLC gathering in Des Moines, not to mention my regular duties and responsibilities at St. Patrick's parish in Council Bluffs.

Peace, -FC



photo by Jo Peterson

Lazarus House before we began work on the roof.

## Special Needs!\$!\$!\$!

The summer months are always slow for donations and support. Carla reports that we have just enough money in the checking account to pay for the printing and mailing of this issue of *vp*. As our readers know, it is not easy to keep up with monthly bills while putting money into making necessary repairs on the houses.

Our current house rehab projects are moving pretty slowly. Jeff got a good start on replacing the roof on Lazarus House only to find that the chimney needs to be rebuilt. The roofing job cannot continue until this is done. If you or someone you know can donate professional masonry skills and/or cash, please contact us.

All three of our houses need general maintenance and repair work. If your church or community organization is looking for a service project, we are the ticket! We are more than happy to give presentations regarding the special work we do at the house and our special needs.

If you are interested in helping or hearing more about us, contact us at: P.O. Box 4551 Des Moines, IA 50306 - or call - (515) 243-0765.



# Bishop Dingman Memorial Fund Update

By Jessica Barnhill

Between the last printing of *via pacis* on March 24th and the open house on May 1, 1993, \$4578.50 was donated to the Catholic Worker House with \$2400.00 being designated for the Bishop Dingman Memorial Fund. It is great to get checks in the mail but, for me, the most encouraging part of collecting and depositing the monetary gifts has been my exposure to the extended Catholic Worker community. We received letters and donations from all over the city of Des Moines and, to my surprise, from all over the country. Here are samples from some of the letters we've received.

"Greetings to the Catholic Worker Community,

Thank you for the recent issue of *via pacis*. I've missed hearing about Catholic Worker activities. I'm sorry, but not surprised, at the lack of support from our current bishop.

I am glad, however, that your "orthodoxy" is questioned. I think that means you're on target."

-Connie Vogel

"Dear Workers,

I've been sitting with grand-children while their parents are at a medical meeting. I took two of them with me to hear a concert by Lincoln College. One song had the words 'mama, will they sell us in the morning? Yes, yes, yes' etc. I tried to explain to the five year old with me about when people were enslaved. She replied, 'it wouldn't be so bad if your grandma bought you!'"

-Love, Meredith

"Dear Wendy, Carla, Norman, Fr. Frank, and all the good kids and good folks at the Des Moines Catholic Worker:



Bishop Dingman on the line at SAC

The Bishop Dingman Living Memorial C.W. Fund check is to honor my daughter-in-law, Maureen Wolf. She lives in Fresno, CA and on April 4th will celebrate her birthday. When she lived in Des Moines years ago, she was interested in your CW House. I have sent

the splendid (welcome) spring issue of *via pacis* on to her, and she will be pleased to know that her birthday gift will honor Bishop Dingman's work and life. She and my son, George Peterson, (did not cross) but celebrated Holy Innocents Day at SAC many years ago. Thank you all for the blessings of your work and love."

-Jean Peterson (Omaha)

"Dear Catholic Worker,

Enclosed is a check for the Catholic Worker Bishop Dingman Memorial Fund from the B.V.M. sisters in Des Moines. Our family thinks it is so good of them to do this.

-Sincerely, Louise Dingman"

"Dear Louise,

The B.V.M.'s in the city have been aware of different memo-

rials in honor of your brother. We decided that we would send our small contribution to you so that the family could determine where it would best be used.

-Lovingly,  
Sister Brian McCoy, B.V.M."

"...Working at Anawim Housing (local housing effort), I see the urgent need everyday of the services you offer. We continue to work for affordable housing so that people can stabilize their lives. Your work helps keep people going in the interim. Keep up the good work!"

-Jean Fitzpatrick

"Dear Friends,

It has been a while since I heard from you and I'm delighted to get your latest newspaper. Its arrival during Holy Week seems fortuitous... Please keep me on your mailing list and, again, thanks for finding me! I just moved into a new home and your presence here with the paper is appreciated."

-In Christ's Peace,  
Jerry Caughey



## via pacis

Newsletter of the Des Moines  
Catholic Worker Community

Bishop Dingman House 1310 - 7th St.  
(515) 243-0765

Msgr. Ligutti House 1301 - 8th St.

Lazarus House 1317 - 8th St.  
(515) 246-1499

### Community Members

Janice Baker, Jessica Barnhill, Carla Dawson and children: Julius, Joshua, and Jordan  
Andrea Loeffelholz, Liz Richardson, Norman Searah, Lori Smith, Jeff Tedder and children: Jeffry, Norma, and Sheila

### Newsletter Staff

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Council Bluffs, IA

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Des Moines, IA

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Rose Hill Farm, Marion, SD

## Weekly Friday Night Mass Offered

Beginning July 9th, there will be a Catholic Mass celebrated each Friday night at 7:30 p.m. at the Catholic Worker.

We look forward to reviving this Friday night tradition as a regular feature at the DMCW. Along with the spiritual value of having a weekly Eucharist, the mass serves as an opportunity for community building. This is your invitation to join us in worship and celebration. Mark your calendar. Everyone is welcome!

### Friday Mass and Saturday Community Meeting Schedule:

(\*All Saturday Community Meetings are open and are held at Dingman House. Join us for donuts and coffee.)

Fri., July 9	with	Fr. Dave Fleming
Fri., July 16	with	Fr. Frank Cordaro
*Sat., July 17	Community Meeting - 8:00 a.m.	
Fri., July 25	with	Fr. Dave Polich
Fri., July 30	with	Fr. John Ludwig
Fri., Aug. 6	with	Fr. Tank DeCarlo
Fri., Aug. 13	with	Fr. Marty Chevelier
Fri., Aug. 20 & Sat., Aug. 21 - DMCW helps host Lakes and Prairies Life Community gathering - No mass or meeting		
Fri., Aug. 27	with	Fr. Dave Polich
Fri., Sept. 3	with	Fr. Dave Fleming
Fri., Sept. 10	with	Fr. Frank Cordaro
*Sat., Sept. 11	Community Meeting - 8:00 a.m.	
Fri., Sept. 17	with	Fr. John Ludwig
Fri., Sept. 24	with	Fr. Jim Wilwerding
Fri., Oct. 1	with	Fr. Kevin Cameron
Fri., Oct. 8	with	Fr. Frank Cordaro
*Sat., Oct 9	Community Meeting - 8:00 a.m.	



# Community News

by Carla Dawson

Jeff has been praying for sun this last week. So far he's been given two days. He has been working on repairing the roof each day until sundown, taking time out only to have lunch and dinner. Kelvin, Elton, and Joe have been helping him and all of them need extra prayers so that they remain healthy to complete the job.

Lori has been very busy doing laundry and baking cookies. The incessant rain makes the task of keeping up with the laundry virtually impossible.

Janice and Andrea just returned from a seven-day vacation in Washington, D.C. At

Clarion Alliance, Janice is working on energy conservation in relation to the power plant in Pleasant Hill, a suburb of Des Moines.

Andrea is starting a women's support group. The first meeting was on May 14, and the next meeting will be on June 4. We are hoping all goes well for her in this endeavor.

Liz has been keeping busy organizing a Death Penalty speaking tour for Ed Fallon. Her article about the tour appears elsewhere in this issue.

Jessica is working on the garden. She and Liz went to the Model Cities Community Center today to pick up some seedlings. Both of them had quite a bit of fun last week when they played in the mud with my sons, Joshua and Jordan. They were a filthy sight to behold.

Jessica now has a new slogan, "Just say NO!"

I hope Julius and Luke have learned some lessons about who their true friends are and what true friendship is. Katie learned a valuable lesson about bringing friends home without first consulting the child's parents. The police picked her friend up from our house after her mother had been searching for her for over two hours.

Wendy's husband, Antonio, has gone to El Salvador in hopes of obtaining his paper for residency. He was given a two year temporary residency status; he will have to apply again in two years for permanent status.

Norman has been fixing a cabinet that was covered up in



Kyanja and Joshua . . . waiting for summer weather  
photo by Jo Peterson

Dingman House and been planting rose bushes to brighten up the yards.

I have been busy with working ten hours a week at Moulton School, babysitting and attending board meetings. Yesterday, I had another birthday and it hardly seems possible that another year has passed.

Jeff and I went to Eagle

Grove where we received a very warm welcome. The people there are open to what we are doing at the Worker.

I hope this paper finds everyone in good health and spirit. Thank you each and every one for helping to make the Des Moines Catholic Worker a place of hope hospitality and peace.



photo by Joe Jacoby

DMCW community and friends at the open house, May 1, 1993.

## 60th Anniversary Open House

by Janice Baker

The Des Moines Catholic Worker House held an Open House on May 1, 1993, to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the Catholic Worker movement started by Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin. Although the rain kept many people away, we still managed to have a good time with those extended community members who stopped by and offered support.

It was a day full of memories and discussions of Catholic Worker ideology. The dining room was strewn with photo albums of Catholic Workers come and gone, and books of old editions of the *via pacis*. To make the day more special, we had a photographic exhibit by Mary Farrell. She is a founding member of the Dan Corcoran Catholic Worker House in Winona, Minnesota, and a free-lance photographer. She spent a year traveling to Catholic Worker Houses around the country taking pictures of wor-

kers and movement activities. The exhibit contained photographs from New York City to Los Angeles and even had a former DMCW member, Carmen Trotta, featured. It was a hopeful reminder to us in Des Moines that we are not facing world problems alone.

I might not be able to say that the open house was a smashing success but we did have a great stir fry dinner courtesy of Jessica Barnhill. Besides, there is always next year.

## Norman's Whereabouts

by Norman Searah

Hello! I'm putting the finishing touches on my article while visiting Frank (known to many as Fr. Frank) in Council Bluffs. I'm in one room writing this article and Frank is in his room writing about his trip to El Salvador. As a 14 year veteran of the Catholic Worker movement, I consider myself lucky to have a friend like Frank. He has been a good friend and supporter of the DMCW and of mine. I realize there are other Catholic Workers who are not so lucky.

Every CW community needs its friends and supporters to keep going. This is really true during the summer when support is not strong.

Right now there are many Catholic Worker communities needing live in staff. Some have even had to close because of a lack of full-time community members. The Dubuque CW had to close for this reason. It always hurts me to see this happen.

Speaking of communities, it has been good to be back from Peoria. I'm planning to return

to the Peoria CW every once in awhile for visits. The reason for this is because I had promised to spend two years there, but only stayed eight months because the DMCW needed help.

Since returning to Des Moines I have been busy taking care of my health. I've got high blood pressure according to the doctor. It's a borderline problem, so I'm on medication. I still have foot problems. I guess as I get older I can expect more and more health problems. When people get older, they have more health problems - and I'm no different.

I've also been busy doing some home improvements around Dingman House. I'm hoping to start work on the basement and yard in the next couple weeks. We really need a dependable mower. I've been hoping someone would donate a good one to us (hint, hint).

Actually, we need a lot of help with fixing up all three of the DMCW's houses. Right now Jeff is fixing the roof on Lazarus house and needs a mason to repair the chimney. If you know any plumbers, electricians or carpenters

(Continued on page 4)





# Book Review

*New Heaven, New Earth*

Practical Essays on the Catholic Worker Program

Reviewed by Brian Terrell

(Brian is a member of *Strangers and Guests Catholic Worker Community* in Maloy, Iowa)

In the mid 1970's Richard Cleaver and I began our "careers" with the Catholic Worker at St. Joseph House in New York City, a house both blessed and burdened with more than 40 years of tradition and history, by that time. Few Catholic Worker Houses have been around so long that almost any question a newcomer might ask can be answered with "because it's always been done that way!" In those years the community still numbered several Workers (and "Shirkers" if one includes Stanley Vishnewski as one must) who had been with the movement since its beginnings and a sense of continuity with our past, our roots, was pervasive.

A more common experience of the Catholic Worker is the situation Richard met later in the early 1980s in Des Moines, Iowa: a community with a small core of folks committed to and identifying with the Catholic Worker vision, but made up largely of young people at loose ends or maybe taking a few months or a few years from education and jobs to "do good" and decide what to do next. (Ammon Hennacy

charged that the Catholic Worker was more like a station where people waited between trains than a community.) During Richard's years in Des Moines most of these were young men who, resisting registration for the draft, were at the Worker seeking refuge from law and/or family.

These have been more often than not delightful people with good hearts and good motives sincerely attracted to some aspects of the Worker, war resistance, hospitality to the homeless, gardening, crafts or community life, but also as often as not without a grasp of or even an interest in the broader vision of the Worker and the kind of revolution Peter Maurin and Dorothy Day intended to put into motion with its founding.

The noninstitutional "no party line" form of the Catholic Worker makes it easy for even some who are deeply involved in its soup lines and picket lines to mistakenly assume that because the Worker philosophy and tradition are not defined or codified by laws or rules that it has neither.

In the 1950s Robert Ludlow, then an editor of *The Catholic Worker* newspaper, New York, offered his reflections on what the Worker is about in an essay that has become classic, "The Catholic Worker Positions." Logically and clearly as Ludlow's "positions" explained Catholic Worker thought for

his time, Richard Cleaver saw the need ("the truth needs restating every 20 years." Peter Maurin) to explore these questions with those living and working with him at the Des Moines Worker house and with those who read their paper, *via pacis*.

These articles which Richard wrote and which were published in *via pacis* in 1981-82, followed and expanded on Ludlow's format of explaining the Workers' positions as they relate to "economics," "politics," and "psychology," adding "social relations" and "relations to nature" to Ludlow's list. In each of these areas Richard offers a critique of society as we find it as well as measures that can be taken by individuals and communities to foster a society more in keeping with the gospel requirements of love and justice.

Not waiting the 20 years prescribed by Peter Maurin, Beth Preheim and Michael Sprong of Rose Hill Books, Marion SD, asked Richard to review and update his work of 10 years ago and published the result as a new book, *New Heaven, New earth: Practical Essays on the Catholic Worker Program*.

In his recently written afterward, Richard reminds us that the Catholic Worker has long preached the stateless society based on the common good as opposed to both the rugged individualism of capitalism and the rugged collectivism of com-

munist and so has been ridiculed and dismissed as irrelevant utopianism by friends and enemies alike. While he names and warns against the danger of the Catholic Worker in this stage of its history becoming a quaint and curious relic of the past, Richard also hails this as a "promising moment" for the Worker. The anarchism of Dorothy Day, Peter Maurin and Peter Kropotkin in these days after the fall of what has passed for communism may now offer a more tenable alternative to the cut-throat capitalism that loudly claims victory in the cold war even as it slips into a chaos of its own.

Richard's book is a call to the Catholic Worker movement to respond to this moment of danger and promise. Rooted as we must be in scripture, the lives of the saints, and social teaching of the church, we are not faithful to that heritage if we simply keep looking to the past, even to Peter Maurin and Dorothy Day, for guidance. Nor can we "consume the theology" of Third World peoples as we do their coffee or diamonds, as Richard quotes Elizabeth McAllister. Commitment to our traditions and solidarity with those seeking

liberation here and abroad demand that we do our work of recognizing the injustices around us and proposing and living out solutions to those injustices.

Accompanying Richard's essays in *New Heaven, New Earth* is work done by an unidentified artist. Without imitating other "established" Catholic Worker artists such as Eichenberg, Bethune, Cattin and Donatelli, she or he is working their liturgical-proletarian tradition. It "fits" the text.

Taking up very little space, Robert Ludlow's original "Catholic Worker Positions" could have been included in this book and might have helped put Richard's 1981 and 1982 reflections in context.

The other members of our little agronomic Catholic Worker House here in Southwest Iowa await my completion of this review to read *New Heaven, New Earth* themselves. I am confident it will provide grist for the mill Peter Maurin called "clarification of thought," essential for building community and for building the theory of revolution, the Kingdom of God we pray for daily.

## Norman's Whereabouts

(Continued from page 3)  
who may want to help, please send them our way.

Lately, I've also been getting into wood carving. I'm not real good at it yet. I've been working on a candle holder.

I've been learning some things about Germany from Andrea, the BVSer from Germany. We have three other BVSeers living with us. They've been busy with working their other jobs as well as at the house. They have helped plant a garden in the vacant lot across from Ligutti House. We are lucky to have them.

Lately, we have had a full house, which is good. Most of our guests are into improving their situation. There are always a few who aren't. But that is to be expected. They seem to depend on others more than on themselves. Often it is the children who suffer the most. It is difficult to see people return to the house after a year or so in no better shape than the last time they were here. I find that the most I can do is help out as much as possible while they are here and to pray for them.

Speaking of prayer, I've de-

cided to put on hold my dream of joining a religious order and becoming a monk. Instead I will continue to work on my health, prayer life, and my commitment to the Catholic Worker.

I'm really looking forward to visiting the L.A. Catholic Worker with Frank in August. I like visiting new (for me) CW communities and I've never been to the L.A. house before. I'll tell you about the trip in the next issue of *via pacis*.

I thank you for your time and prayers and for your support of our community.

## *New Heaven, New Earth*

Practical Essays on the  
Catholic Worker Program



by Richard G. Cleaver

Forward by Lana Jacobs

Edited by Beth Preheim  
and Michael Sprong

Available for \$5.95 (plus \$1.25 postage) from  
Rose Hill Books, Rt.2 Box 54A,  
Marion, SD 57043



## Twelve Days In May

## A Report On El Salvador

by Fr. Frank Cordaro

For 12 days in May, I joined my good friend, Presbyterian minister Bob Cook and 13 others on an eight-day tour of El Salvador. Our group included Helen Tichy (82 years young!), the Des Moines Catholic Worker's longest and dearest friend and supporter. The delegation was sponsored by the Share Foundation and the Des Moines Presbytery. Helen and I were the only non-Presbyterians in the delegation.

For years, Bob has been helping to raise money through Presbyterian Hunger Fund for the small rural community of El Tablon. In 1990, he decided to travel to El Salvador to see first-hand how El Tablon was benefitting from the money he helped raise. Returning to the U.S., Bob was more excited than ever about El Salvador and his work in solidarity with the struggling community of El Tablon.

Since 1990, Bob has made two more trips to El Tablon and helped raise an additional \$10,000 for reconstruction of the community's only school.

Bob is now preparing to live and minister for an extended period of time in El Tablon.

As well as getting an authentic look and real education about the conditions and realities of El Salvador, our delegation hopefully will help solidify support for Bob's continuing work with and for the people of El Tablon.



## Hogar Juvenil Divino Salvador

Bob and I arrived in El Salvador four days ahead of the rest of our delegation in order to prepare for their arrival. We spent a couple days with Fr. Mike Colonnese at Hogar Juvenil Divino Salvador, a home for orphaned boys and young men. Located in Sonsonate, it is a unique refuge as it cares for boys and young men between the ages of 12 and 22.

Most orphanages can only manage to care for younger children. Typically, those orphans who are age 12 and older are out on the streets. Mike takes in these young men; offers a safe, secure living space; meets their basic physical needs; affords them access to educational opportunities; and adds a whole measure of love and a family life they would otherwise never have.

Four of the young men from Divino Salvador currently study at the university in San Salvador and return home on weekends.

Every one of the young men living here lost family members in the long civil war. Some



Mural of Archbishop Romero at University of El Salvador  
photo by Frank Cordaro

witnessed the murder of their families. A couple of the boys fought on opposing sides during the war.

Given the harsh realities in El Salvador, Hogar Juvenil Divino Salvador is a remarkable facility. Fr. Mike, a 62-year-old priest from the Davenport diocese, whose life story reads as well as any Andrew Greeley novel, now wants to make his contribution to El Salvador by providing good lay leadership through the young men in his orphanage.

Bob hopes to spend the first three months of his extended stay in El Salvador at Fr. Mike's teaching English and improving his Spanish.



## Archbishop Romero's Home and Place of Death

On Monday, May 10th we met the rest of our delegation at the airport in San Salvador. After settling in at Casa Maya (our accommodations in San

Salvador), we visited the chapel where, in 1980, Archbishop Oscar Romero was gunned down while celebrating mass. It is a simple chapel that serves a convent and cancer hospital.

Archbishop Romero lived in a one-room apartment next to the convent. He celebrated daily mass at the chapel while he was alive. It was a fitting location to begin our delegation's journey through "real life" in El Salvador.



## Shanty Town in Sonsonate

The next day we returned to Sonsonate with the whole delegation. We visited a newly formed shanty-town settlement just outside the city. Located atop a hot, barren, dusty hill overlooking the city, it is nothing more than a hundred or so homeless families exposed to the elements and barely surviving. The shanties, "homes" to the people, primarily are constructed of cardboard boxes. Many of the

small children run about naked because they have no clothing to wear.

The community's only source of potable water is from two unreliable spigots which are turned on for only three hours daily. If the people don't get their water at the prescribed time or if the system isn't working (which often happens), they are out of luck. Two three-holed outhouses are the only toilet facilities available for the entire community.

With no secure source of food and a lack of basic medical services, the families, especially children, suffer many health problems. A lone woman serves as the community midwife. In her one-room shack (which doubles as the community clinic) all she has to offer the ill of the community is a few band-aids and nothing more - not even an aspirin to help kill the pain.

The community is completely insecure. There is no law enforcement. Acts of vandalism and rape are common. Mere survival is an heroic act.

In this shanty-town we were

also introduced to Maximilian, the first of many grass-roots organizers we met in El Salvador. Maximilian is a 62-year-old resident of the community. He acts as spokesperson and advocate for the community in its dealings with federal and city government. A seasoned veteran of the people's struggle, Maximilian shows no signs of wearing down.

Like so many of his contemporaries, he realizes the war is over, and a unique time in the history of El Salvador is at hand. There are more opportunities for justice for the poor than at any other time in their history.

Maximilian has helped organize his community into working committees and has introduced a democratic organizational structure. They seek the basic necessities of life, and in the effort, a measure of human dignity. Maximilian reminded me of John the Baptist on that hot, barren hillside overlooking the city of Sonsonate.

That day we got our introduction to the level of poverty that exists in El Salvador.

Surprisingly, the residents of this shanty-town consider themselves lucky. There are many others who are just as destitute, but are without community organizers to give them hope for improved social life.

In the afternoon, the entire delegation visited Fr. Mike's facility. The contrast between Divino Salvador and the shanty-town was striking. I began to realize how fortunate the young men in the orphanage are to have each other and Fr. Mike.



## San Jose Las Flores

On Wednesday, May 12 we drove 3 1/2 hours to San Jose Las Flores in the province of Chalatenango. This small community near the Honduras border is an area where heavy fighting took place during the war.

Most of the homes nearby in the mountainous countryside were destroyed in the fighting. Many of the town's buildings were also destroyed. At one point during the war the military stationed troops in this small town.

For several years the town was uninhabited by civilian population. The present community began returning in 1988. Many came from refugee camps in Honduras.

The community operates a collective bakery and a women-owned weaving shop. A health and dental clinic are run by the community. San Jose Las Flores is also the home of the Lisiado Rehabilitation Center for disabled war combatants.



# Twelve Days In May:



Bob Cook with young men at Hogar Juvenil Divino Salvador  
photo by Frank Cordaro

## Causes of Civil War Still Exist

During 12 years of civil war, over 75,000 El Salvadorans were killed. Most were civilians murdered by the military or right-wing death squads. In a nation the size of Massachusetts with a population of five million people, almost everyone knows someone who was killed.

Few families escaped tragedy during the war. One-fifth of the population fled the country and another one-fifth was internally displaced. Today, many families are occupying homes or farming plots of land that don't belong to them. Ex-combatants are returning "home" only to find they have no house in which to live and no land to work. Nationally, unemployment is over 50%.

Land reform was one of the major components of the recently signed peace accords. The government was to make funds available enabling families to buy the homes and land they are occupying. Ex-combatants were to be given assistance in order to secure land and housing. Little of this has been done.

During the war the military organized local vigilante groups who were paid to turn in suspected guerilla sympathizers. This and other government stratagem to defeat rebels turned neighbor against neighbor. With the end of the war, these enemies are trying to live together peacefully in the same communities. Still, many revenge killings take place, and the process of local reconciliation is not going well.

The population of El Salvador is still heavily armed. Roving bands of robbers have made highway travel at night nearly impossible. Businesses and wealthier home-owners hire their own armed security guards.

Civil police are not impartial in response to criminal behavior. Robberies and killings committed by local rightists often are ignored. Especially for the poor, there is little protection from the authorities.

With the end of the war, international money has been pouring into El Salvador. Intended to rebuild the country, much of the money instead ends up in the pockets of individuals and communities friendly to the government during the war years - a reward for their loyalty.

Some of the international aid has been used for token, cosmetic gestures intended to make the government look good to the international community. For example, in San Jose Las Flores aid from the U.S. was used to pave a 100-foot segment of road leading into town. Although the project was unnecessary, it made for a good photo opportunity for the U.S. funding agency.

## The UN Truth Commission Report

Fear of the military is still high in El Salvador. The recently released UN Truth Commission report confirmed what we in the Peace Movement were saying all along in the Reagan/Bush years: that 95% of all the killings and human rights violations during the war were committed by the Salvadoran Army and rightist death squads.

Several army officers are named by the UN report as having direct connection with gross human rights violations. The majority of those named (46) are graduates of the School of the Americas (SOA) located at Fort Benning, Georgia.

Of the three officers cited in the murder of Archbishop

Romero, two are SOA graduates. Of the five officers cited in the killing of four U.S. Church-women in 1980, three are SOA graduates. Of the 12 officers cited for 1981 El Mozote Massacre, in which hundreds of unarmed civilians were killed, eight are SOA graduates.

The Truth Commission also recommended that each of the officers cited in their report be removed from the military and prevented from participating in the political process. This recommendation is yet to be acted on.

The military remains the most powerful force in the country. Even the Christiani government, whose Arena Party masterminded the feared death squads, had no control over the military.

The UN Truth Commission also recommends that the entire El Salvadoran Supreme Court be removed from office due to their unquestioning support of the military and their refusal to try blatant human rights violators. This recommendation remains unmet.

## Continued UN Presence in El Salvador

As we prepared to leave San Jose Las Flores, two El Salvadoran jet fighters buzzed the town. We didn't think much of it at the time, but members of the community, especially the children, were frightened. It was not very long ago that these same planes brought death and destruction upon them.

On our return to San Salvador, we stopped in Chalatenango to report the jet incident to the UN observers based there.

The United Nations has had peace-keeping troops in the country since the signing of the

peace accords. Their mission is to help ensure that the provisions of the accords are met.

Currently, the plan is for them to remain until after national elections slated to take place in March 1994.

The UN observers in Chalatenango told us there is nothing they can do directly about the incident in San Jose Las Flores. They reported to us that such actions by the military are on the increase. As we parted, they assured us that they would record the incident and pass on the information to the El Salvador Air Force along with their concerns.

## The 1994 National Elections

The next day we visited the offices of the Social Institute for Democracy (SID), a non-governmental organization working for fair national elections. SID hopes to train 2,500 people to educate and register unregistered voters (often poor) regarding the upcoming elections.

This will be no small task. El Salvador has no experience with democracy in recent memory. Overthrown by a military coup, the last elected government fell in 1932. That same year 32,000 Indians and peasants were slaughtered by the military in an uprising in the Sonsonate province.

Estimates are that nearly three million El Salvadorans are eligible to vote. To vote, one must be 18 years of age and possess a voter registration card (VRC). There are great obstacles to obtaining a VRC. One must be in possession of a National Identification Card (NIC).

With the social disruption created by 12 years of civil war, tens of thousands of people are without their NIC. To reapply for a NIC, one must prove that she or he was born in El Salvador. This requires

possession of a valid birth certificate. It is not uncommon for birth certificates to have been lost or destroyed. Also, many of the poor have no official record of their birth.

If one is lucky enough to possess or obtain a birth certificate, she or he must apply for a VRC at their regional municipality. Controlled by Arena loyalists, these offices are reluctant to issue VRCs to known leftist sympathizers.

As if these complications and barriers are not enough, 60% of the population cannot read which makes voter education and registration difficult. Plus, the existing rolls of registered voters include thousands of people who are now dead. The prospect for fraud and vote tampering during the upcoming elections is high.

It is a real mess and much needs to be done in preparation of the upcoming elections. Many non-governmental and international agencies are sending people and resources to help ensure fair elections. To this date the U.S. Government has not contributed a dime to the cause. Ironically, the U.S. spent hundreds of millions of dollars to perpetuate the war, but isn't willing to spend only a fraction of that amount for free, peaceful elections.

## The Jesuits and the University of Central America

In the afternoon we visited the University of Central America (UCA). Our first stop was the community house where on November 16, 1989 six Jesuit priests and their two housekeepers were murdered. I thought I was prepared for what we would see.

At the time of the killings I had read all I could about the awful event. But nothing prepared me for being on the very spot where the murders took place. Standing in the



Fr. Frank and Helen Tichy in San Jose Las Flores  
photo by Bob Cook



# A Report On El Salvador

we saw the objects de-  
stroyed by the military and  
the photos of the dead.  
The secretary who worked for  
these good men, gave  
a chilling account of the  
killers forced the six  
out of their home. In the  
house they shot the  
in the head with hollow-  
bullets that explode on  
impact.  
Apparently, the soldiers not  
wanted to kill the men, but  
wanted to kill their ideas.  
The soldiers later found and  
the Jesuit's housekeeper  
her 16-year-old daughter.  
I did not want any wit-  
nesses. I found such contempt  
for human life and the Church  
difficult to bear.



## Center for the Study of the National Process

Following our tour of the  
Jesuit's home and a visit to the  
cemetery where they are buried,  
I had a session with Carlos, a  
member of the University's  
Center for the Study of the  
National Process. This "think  
tank" studies all aspects of  
life in El Salvador: social,  
political, economic and cul-  
tural - from the perspective  
of the University.

The first question I asked  
was "What is the perspective of  
the University?" Carlos an-  
swered, "The perspective of the  
University is of the University."  
Carlos said, "is social change  
a bias for the poor."

It became very clear to me  
in El Salvador when you  
decide to advocate for social  
change with a bias for the poor,  
no matter who you are, you be-  
come an enemy of the gov-  
ernment, a communist sympa-  
thizer and a target for the death  
squad. What happened to the  
Jesuits and their two house-  
keepers was an inevitable con-  
sequence of the Jesuits' commit-  
ment to side with the poor in El  
Salvador.

Carlos went on to tell us that  
peace accords simply trans-  
ferred El Salvador from an active  
war to a political process.  
However, all the causes for war  
still exist. There are no  
guarantees that any of it will  
stop. At the very least, the  
people's struggle has forced a  
governmental commitment to a  
political process to help solve  
the country's problems.

Carlos outlined some steps  
that must be taken if the coun-  
try is going to proceed with the  
political process:

There must be full compliance  
with the terms of the Peace  
Accords and a follow through  
on the recommendations of the  
Truth Commission Report;

--the military must be cleansed  
of human rights violators and  
put under civilian control;

--the National Police force must  
be neutral and enforce all laws  
equally;

--the current justice system  
must be revamped beginning  
with the ouster of the present  
Supreme Court;

--land reform agreements must  
be fulfilled;

--ex-combatants must be helped  
in securing homes and land to  
work;

--the National Human Rights  
Commission needs to start  
functioning again without threat  
of reprisals.

Regarding the recent declared  
amnesty by the Arena Party  
control parliament, Carlos said  
that any amnesty should be  
connected with a broader recon-  
ciliation process. To have a  
true and lasting reconciliation  
you must also be willing to  
admit to the truth and seek to  
establish justice.

The government's declared  
amnesty does neither of these.  
The UCA would rather see  
pardons given. That way the  
wrongs committed will not be  
forgotten.

Finally, we asked Carlos what  
we should be doing back in the  
U.S. He said:

--we should continue to foster  
solidarity and love between peo-  
ple and nations;

--we should ask our government  
to account for its participation  
in the human rights violations  
that took place in El Salvador  
during the Civil War;

--the U.S. needs to have its own  
Truth Commission to deal with  
human rights violations it di-  
rected and initiated in El  
Salvador;

--we need to contribute directly  
to the reconstruction of El  
Salvador since it was our  
government's policies and  
monies that helped destroy the  
country;

--and we should keep alive our  
interest and love for the people  
of El Salvador forever.

When we left the UCA, I had  
experienced the commitment of  
the Jesuits and their University  
to struggle for justice and for  
the poor and never felt more  
proud of being a Catholic. And  
after seeing the direct and hor-  
rible consequence of our gov-  
ernment's policies in El  
Salvador, I was never more  
ashamed of being a U.S.  
citizen.



## El Tablon

On day four of our  
delegation's tour we headed for  
the small town of El Tablon,  
the community Bob Cook along  
with the Des Moines Presbytery  
has been helping. El Tablon is  
located in the province of  
Usulután, one of the most



Mural at the University of El Salvador  
photo by Frank Cordaro

beautiful and abundant agricul-  
tural regions in the country. The  
major product is coffee grown  
on the lush slopes of dormant  
volcanoes.

After travelling half-way  
down a mountain-side on a  
treacherous dirt road, we came  
to a small clearing by the  
school. A crowd of several  
hundred people, most of them  
small children under 10 years  
old, greeted us.

Not only was El Tablon  
represented, but also there were  
people from the surrounding  
areas. It was the biggest cele-  
bration in the town's history.

A group of local teenagers  
provided music. The band's  
speakers were powered by  
batteries since electricity is not  
available. Speeches were made,  
dancing followed. Despite  
poverty and destruction left by  
years of war, we were greeted  
with joy and hope. It was a  
moving experience.

After the music, dancing and  
speeches we were served rice,  
beans or scrambled eggs and  
two tortillas. With no silver-  
ware, the tortillas serve as  
eating utensils.

Forty six 46 families live in  
El Tablon. Homes can be  
found on either side of a foot  
path that continues down the  
mountain side and ends with a  
roughly made soccer field.

Their homes, one-room  
structures, consist of an outdoor  
stove and a few farm animals  
and not much more. Half the  
people do not own the land on  
which they live. And nobody  
owns the land they farm. To  
feed themselves, they raise  
crops on small plots of land  
not already claimed by coffee  
growers. They barely eke out  
an existence.

We slept in the schoolhouse  
that night on mats borrowed  
from the nearby town of Berlin.  
After breakfast we gathered in  
one of the classrooms to meet  
with the community's directive:  
the elected representatives and

heads of community committees  
on education, health and  
community affairs.

After introductions, our  
delegation presented the direc-  
tive with supplies and materials  
we brought. Items include  
twelve suitcase loads of mater-  
ials: shoes, clothes, medical  
supplies, sewing materials, and  
school supplies.

When Bob last visited the  
community, he brought along a  
soccer ball. That very day, the  
men of the community made  
the soccer field. Soccer is the  
national pastime. Every com-  
munity has its own soccer team.

We brought 15 soccer balls  
and soccer uniforms. These  
brought the biggest reaction  
from the community. They had  
already made list of teams. A  
lot of community building and  
social education takes place on  
the soccer fields.

We also presented the  
president of the directive with  
\$900 U.S. To assure the people  
that there would be no cheating,  
he counted the money aloud  
and then gave the money to the  
treasurer.

We then heard the story of the  
community. By now it was all  
so familiar: soldiers coming, the  
killing and torturing of civilians  
along with the combatants,  
people fleeing their homes,  
bombing by plane, mortar, and  
hand grenades.

Most of the present  
community members came from  
the other side of the valley  
where the repression was worse.

I wondered out loud how  
these poor people became a  
national security risk for the  
USA?

They told us of their hopes  
for the future. They talked with  
pride about their new school.

The school, with first, second  
and third grades has nearly 100  
students served by one teacher  
four days a week. The teacher  
is paid by the government.  
However, she is leaving in  
August to have a baby. They

do not know if she will be re-  
placed.

They have a few workbooks,  
but cannot write in them be-  
cause they must be saved for  
the following year. They had a  
few scraps of paper from note-  
pads in which the children can  
write.

There was so little there, yet  
they were so grateful. Since  
there are no options for further  
education, after third grade all  
children go to work in the  
fields even the exceptionally  
bright ones.

Everyone in the community  
has their National Identification  
Cards, but they have yet to re-  
ceive their Voter Registration  
Cards. They have all applied in  
Berlin. The Berlin city govern-  
ment, controlled by the Arena  
Party, is reluctant to give VRCs  
to people they believe are leftist  
sympathizers.

The people face many  
challenges. However, they  
worry most about personal se-  
curity; they deal with armed  
bandits, personal vendettas, a  
non-neutral police force which  
sides with rightist factions, and  
a court system without justice.

When we left the community,  
they were dividing the materials  
and money we brought them  
equally among the families.

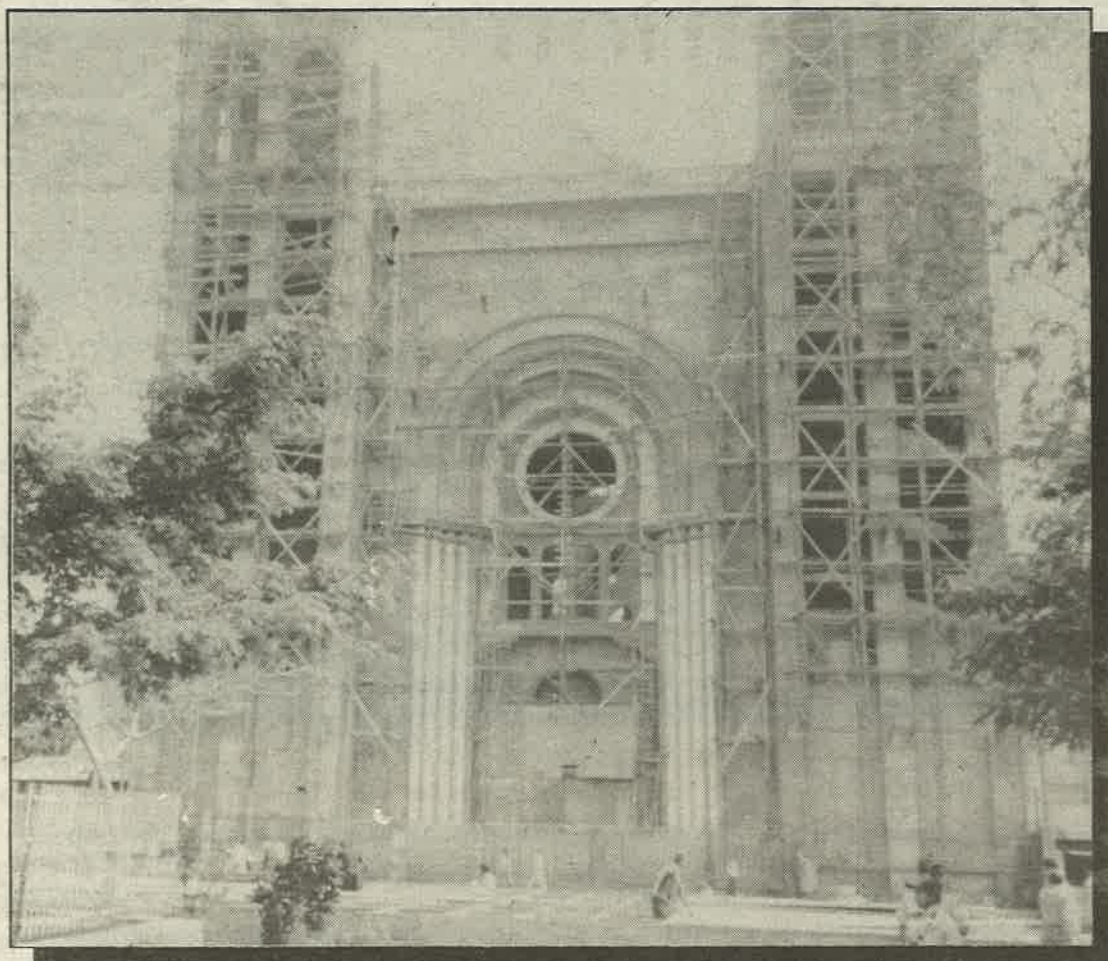
I thought about how our  
government called these people  
communists during the war, yet  
they were the most democratic  
people I've ever met. At the  
local level they are more  
democratic than any neighbo-  
rhood in the U.S. Their  
grassroots organizations are  
their strength and their hope for  
the future.





Twelve Days In May

# A Report On El Salvador



The cathedral in San Salvador  
photo by Frank Cordaro

## The Parish of "Maria Madre de Los Pobres"

On Sunday morning, May 16 we attended mass at the parish of Maria Madre de Los Pobres (Mother Mary of the Poor) in San Salvador. This parish is located in one of San Salvador's poorest neighborhoods. There are 30,000 people in the parish. It is staffed by two Spanish Jesuits, some nuns and a number of lay people. It has a school and a medical clinic. The parish sponsors a community bakery and a women's sewing cooperative.

I was privileged to celebrate at the 9:30 a.m. mass. I understood little of the Spanish. Yet I felt part of a beautiful service, filled with much life and spirit. The church building is very simple, more like a

large hay barn with four foot steel corrugated walls surrounding the building to give maximum open air effect. I could not help but notice the many holes along walls of the church.

After mass we got to talk to the pastor and a couple members of the parish staff. We soon found out why the church walls had so many holes. Like many other poor neighborhoods in San Salvador, the neighborhood had experienced much repression and violence during the civil war. During the offensive in 1989, the neighborhood was bombed by the Salvadoran air force. The holes in the church walls were bullet holes. At one point in the battle the church building was caught in the crossfire.

The church buildings and

grounds became a refuge during the '89 offensive. Over 300 people took sanctuary within the church properties. On the night that the Jesuits were killed at UCA, the parish clinic was bombed. Everyone had to leave the church grounds and the neighborhood.

After hearing their stories, I apologize for our government's involvement and support of the military and the death squads. The pastor said that North Americans are very confusing people. On the one hand, it is our tax dollars and our government that was directly supporting and training the oppressive and brutal El Salvadoran military to the tune of a million and a half dollars a day at the peak of our assistance. And yet, it was international monies, mostly from people in the U.S. that built and supported their church, school and clinic. I agreed with the pastor; we are a very confusing people.

## The University of El Salvador

On our way back to our hotel, we visited the campus of the University of El Salvador. It is the only state-run university in the country. During the civil war it was a center for leftist activities and public dissent. It saw much violence and repression during those years. Students were killed by the military on campus during demonstrations. Teachers were gunned down right in their classrooms by the military. For most of the 1980s the campus

was closed.

During the '89 offensive, the El Salvadoran Air Force bombed the campus. They did this despite the fact that the University was closed, and no one was left on campus. It was just another example of the utter contempt the military had for anyone or any institution that stood up against their repression. As we walked around the campus and saw the bombed out buildings, we were given yet another example of how extensive the military repression was. No institution in the whole of El Salvador's society was left untouched by the conflict.

## The National Cathedral and Archbishop Oscar Romero's Tomb

On our last day, Monday, May 17th, before we went to the airport, we visited the National Cathedral and the tomb of Archbishop Romero. The Cathedral is located in the center of San Salvador. It is boarded up and closed to the public.

When Archbishop Romero was alive, it was in great need of repair. Romero refused to spend any diocesan resources on the building as long as the war raged on and the needs of the poor were ignored. The building was further damaged by the earthquake of 1983 and closed to the public.

The Cathedral seems to be under some reconstruction now. There is scaffolding on the outside walls and construction material on the inside.

Romero's tomb is in the basement of the Cathedral. It is open to the public by appointment. We got in and paid our respects. It was nothing elaborate, just a cement slab and marker, among the dust and construction machinery. Yet, it was a fitting place to end our visit to El Salvador. There is no one more loved and respected person in all of El Salvador. He is a constant reminder of the price paid for speaking the truth and for the church standing with the poor. His spirit and soul is truly in the hearts and souls of the El Salvadoran people.

There is talk of getting Archbishop Romero declared a saint officially in the Catholic Church. The Church would do well to do so. We need examples of Church leadership like Romero. As far as the El Salvadoran people are concerned, Romero is already their saint. The fruits of his work can be found in the hearts and spirits of the El Salvadoran people's struggle for peace and justice.

## Returning to El Salvador in March

The folks at Share looking for people to monitor the Salvadoran elections in March of 1994. I am seriously considering a return to Salvador for this worthwhile effort. If anyone is interested in participating as an international election observer, contact:

Fr. Frank Cordaro  
St. Patrick's Church  
238 S. 6th  
Council Bluffs, IA  
51501  
(712) 325-8830

or  
Rev. Robert Cook  
1050 25th St.  
Des Moines, IA 50311  
(515) 255-5443



Child in shanty town near Sonsonate  
photo by Frank Cordaro



Archbishop Romero - on front of church in San Jose Las Flores

photo by Frank Cordaro



Listening ♦ Respecting ♦ Sharing ♦ Opening

# Conflict Resolution



by Andrea Loeffelholz

We are all faced with miscommunication, misunderstanding and conflict in our daily lives. Conflicts are most often seen as something negative. We usually do not feel very comfortable when we have to deal with them. We may feel that to have problems with somebody is a sign of failure, weakness or irresponsible emotions. The question we need to ask is why we have this negative view of conflict. How can we expect everything to run smoothly? What kind of life would that be? Would we

want human beings to be uniform and indifferent? The fact is we are different. Each of us has our own way of thinking and feeling according to our own experiences and special perspectives. Together we achieve a whole picture. "Single we are one word, together we are a poem" (Bydlinski).

Many problems, I believe, arise from our insecurities. We feel pressured to prove our right to exist. The fact that we are alive, however, is proof that we are a wish and wanted.

I believe that a conflict is not negative. What is negative is that people assume there are just two solutions; victory or defeat. It is natural that there will be tension and problems between people.

Conflicts arise from having different perspectives and confronting them. Having different opinions does not mean "I do not value you". People are more than all or nothing. Conflict is a sign of life; a challenge to learn and grow. There is no life without problems. Life equals tension; between life and death, strength and vulner-

ability, bondage and freedom....

**Tension means connection - communication - life.** To me, tension means that I am a person with an opinion and that I am not indifferent to what somebody is doing. In other words, you affected me and that is good. The question still remains of how to deal with conflict.

There are many ways. Each of us has our own style, with our emotions and feelings playing a crucial role. Most of us are taught to ignore our feelings with the explanation that they are irrational, sentimental and somehow unreal. We learn how to keep our feelings hidden and maintain a cool, calm exterior. This is a fallacy. Our feelings touch us profoundly and are significant to our being human. They determine our actions more than we think. If we choose to ignore them, they will rule us without our awareness.

The result may be thoughts

*"I believe that a conflict is not negative. What is negative is that people assume there are just two solutions: victory or defeat."*

such as, "I do not know why I act this way and neither does anyone else." My anger and aggressions may start affecting people who have nothing to do with my frustrations. It is my personal responsibility to figure out what my feelings, desires and needs are and discuss them at the appropriate time. Nobody knows what my feelings are unless I tell them. It is at these times when negative conflicts may occur.

Others may assume that they know what I am feeling when I might be feeling something else. Although I might feel offended, embarrassed, intimidated or threatened at those times, that may not have been the speaker's intention. Yet this does not mean that my feelings are not valid. The result is often that people feel mistreated, misunderstood and hurt, and then there is no chance for dialogue because the opinions are fixed.

This is why it is important to realize the assumptions are just that--assumptions. It is necessary to express my feelings in this situation and not to judge the person with whom I disagree as "the bad guy". By doing so, I demonstrate respect and show a willingness to listen to the other person that indicates that my opinion is not already fixed.

Similarly, I should mention my expectations of the situation so that one knows what my needs and wants are. Perhaps our relationships would not be so complicated if we did not demand so much from each other.

Many things, including my experiences, wishes, stressors, assumptions and feelings affect what I perceive the speaker is saying. People hear different things when they are in a conversation due to their differences. It is amazing how selective our hearing is. The point is that each of us experiences the same situation differently and consequently interprets the experience from his or her unique perspective.

Therefore, it is beneficial to paraphrase, summarize and ask questions when we speak with someone. We may be surprised to find out that the other people mean something entirely different than what we assumed that he or she meant. Imagine how exciting and interesting our future conversations might be.

We can learn so much from each other when we respect each other enough to listen. Listening allows the person to safely discuss feelings, needs and worries. Admittedly, listening and opening up to another is not always easy. Most of us have wounds from opening up to people who took advantage of our vulnerabilities.

Forgiveness and reconciliation are essential in healing ourselves so that we may one day feel the joy of opening up. This takes time, of course, there are no cure-alls or universal solutions. Conflict resolution is a multi-layered issue

(Continued on page 6)



## Bike Tour for Compassion and Reconciliation

by Liz Richardson

During August, Representative Ed Fallon, a long-time friend of the Des Moines Catholic Worker Community, will tour on bike from Des Moines to Sioux City to speak against the death penalty. Ed will be joined by several CW staff members, including myself, as I am the organizer of the event. For Ed, this bike tour is an act of faith and conscience. He intends to speak with Christians and others about capital punishment, which Ed feels is not only in stark contradiction to the basic tenets central to the message of Christ, but is also bad public policy.

The tour will last the entire month of August, as Ed hopes to speak and witness to as many Iowans as possible. The speaking agenda includes primarily churches and community organizations such as Kiwanis Clubs, Rotary Clubs and women's groups along the route. Ed would also be happy to speak to Bible study classes, at Senior Centers and in homes. The stops will include many large and small towns in northwestern Iowa. Our tentative schedule at this point is as follows:

8/2 - Johnston  
8/3 - Granger

8/5 - Ledges State Park and Boone  
8/6 - Boone  
8/7-8 - Pilot Mound  
8/9 - Dayton  
8/10 - Gowrie  
8/11 - Farnhamville  
8/12 - Lohrville  
8/13 - Lake City  
8/14-15 - Days Off??  
8/16 - Auburn  
8/17 - Lake View  
8/18 - Odebolt  
8/19 - Ida Grove  
8/20 - Holstein  
8/21 - Merville  
8/22 - Sioux City (return to Des Moines that evening)

Ed would welcome any support which others could provide. If you would like to host Ed for one night, provide a meal, attend one of his forums or join him for a few hours of biking, please call me at Clarion Alliance (515) 282-5851. Feel free to call with any questions that you may have. More details about the walk will be available in the coming months as speaking dates and the route are confirmed.



# The Church in the Age of Chaos



By Michael McHugh

Shortly after I arrived here in Des Moines as the new coordinator of Catholic Peace Ministry, Frank Cordaro and I had a lengthy conversation about the state of the world and the position of the Church in it. Frank said that it was too bad the Catholic Church decided to open itself up to the "modern world" in the 1960's, at the very same time the whole world started going to pieces.

The whole system that came into being with the Enlightenment: capitalism, mass production, mass culture, big cities, the worship of science and technology, the nation-state was already showing signs of severe stress thirty years ago. Today, it is showing signs of collapse.

Nevertheless, the Catholic Church is still struggling to adapt itself to this modern, democratic, bourgeois world; trying to figure out how to jettison all the moth-eaten baggage of its Roman and medieval past.

That is the real tragedy of Bishop William Bullock and so many of his colleagues, including the Pope: they are men of the Old Order whose ideology

was set in concrete before Vatican II. They never really adjusted to the changes of the 1960's and, in their heart of hearts, they long for a return of a more feudal, authoritarian Church.

Of course, they have no chance of success; all they can do is fight a hopeless, desperate rear-guard action against the forces of modernity and, now, post-modernity as well!

Even more tragic, though, is the fact that as the modern world itself decays, the hierarchy risks becoming more isolated and divorced from reality than ever. Never before in history has there been a wider gulf between the leaders of the Catholic Church and the "real world" to whom they are supposed to minister. The gulf is getting wider every year.

In short, a church whose leadership is still fighting valiantly to get beyond the 18th and 19th centuries is going to have precious little to say to people in the 21st century, assuming anyone is around to listen.

I am only being slightly sarcastic when I suggest that we might not be around. Clearly, we are going through a crisis the likes of which we haven't seen in the West since the end of the Middle Ages (circa 1350-1550 AD).

Like our own times, that was a period of constant warfare, violence and lawlessness, raging famines and epidemic diseases, religious and ethnic hatreds of all kinds. Understandably, it was also a period of tremendous pessimism and despair which continued for more than 200 years.



We have entered just such a transition period now at the end of the 20th century. From Bosnia to Somalia to the streets of our own deteriorating cities, it is clear that something has gone terribly wrong somewhere and that the present system does not know how to fix it. In this sense, it does not matter that Bill Clinton is in the White House and Boris Yeltsin is in the Kremlin; the problems are simply too big today for any leader to fix even if they had the will and the resources.

In a nutshell, then, we are in for some very lean and tough years in the immediate future and the situation is going to get much worse before it gets even a little better. A lot of us are

going to have to face the fact that most of the beliefs and institutions we take for granted are on their way out; and it is not at all clear what will take their place. Let us hope it is not something worse, such as a repressive, high technology brand of totalitarianism.

Fr. Frank believes that the Church has to take the lead during this crisis if only to give people some hope and a sense of meaning. Unfortunately the Church, as it is structured today, is not in a position to lead anything.

Therefore, Frank believes it is up to us to grasp the reins from the trembling hands of bishops and, at least, try to set an example for the rest of the world. Small faith-based communities, based on principles of non-violence, voluntary poverty, and social justice, are the best way for people to live during this violent and crazy period of world history.

One thing upon which Frank and I agree is that the Catholic Church, as it is presently struc-

tured, would be consigning itself to the dust bin of history if it endorsed such arrangements. Furthermore, we would agree, that most people are not going to give Christian basic communities a whirl, at least not in the United States.

Our culture is far too paranoid, fragmented, racist, competitive, insecure, and materialistic to ever imagine that it could be transformed into something peaceful, loving, communal, and cooperative; in other words, something "Christian", which it absolutely is not today. Only a minority of people will make the attempt to build something different in the U.S., and many of those will likely fail.



I would like to conclude this essay on an optimistic note: I do believe in God and not simply a passive, detached God who observes from On High somewhere. God is active in history; Jesus Christ is an example of that activism, as are Martin Luther King, Oscar Romero, and many others. Moreover, I have met a large number of people who, in my own life, I consider to be God's prophets and emissaries. Even in the worst periods of history they are found, often working quietly and unobtrusively. The point is that God has not abandoned us.

Finally, without sounding like "Suzy Sunshine", I would say that, with God's help, everything will turn out all right in the end. Although I have no idea when that will be or what it will look like, I am confident that God is benevolently working toward some Ultimate Good which few of us can fathom. However, we should not expect to get there in a straight line of constant progress and improvement which, after all, a very modern idea and, consequently, one which is increasingly obsolete and irrelevant.

## Conflict Resolution

(Continued from page 5)

because people are multi-layered and complex. We may never finish working through the layers in the sense that we may never fully know another human being. There is no better time than the present to pick up what is at our feet and begin.

We at the Des Moines Catholic Worker recently decided to work on our conflict resolution skills. Judy Fausch, who

works with Clarion Alliance in a conflict resolution program, gave us some training.

In our sessions we have learned how to actively listen, respond, mediate and reach a consensus. We were each given materials to gain a perspective on our own personality types and how we personally react in conflicts. These sessions were important to learn about alternative ways of handling conflict; especially in a world where it seems the only

response to conflict is to win by power, intimidation, and/or violence.

It is important, therefore, to accept conflict as a part of life and to understand that it is a way of growing and gaining knowledge. In essence, the goal is not in arriving, but in the journey. On that note, take care and shalom.





## Three Feast of the Holy Innocent Line-Crossers Indicted

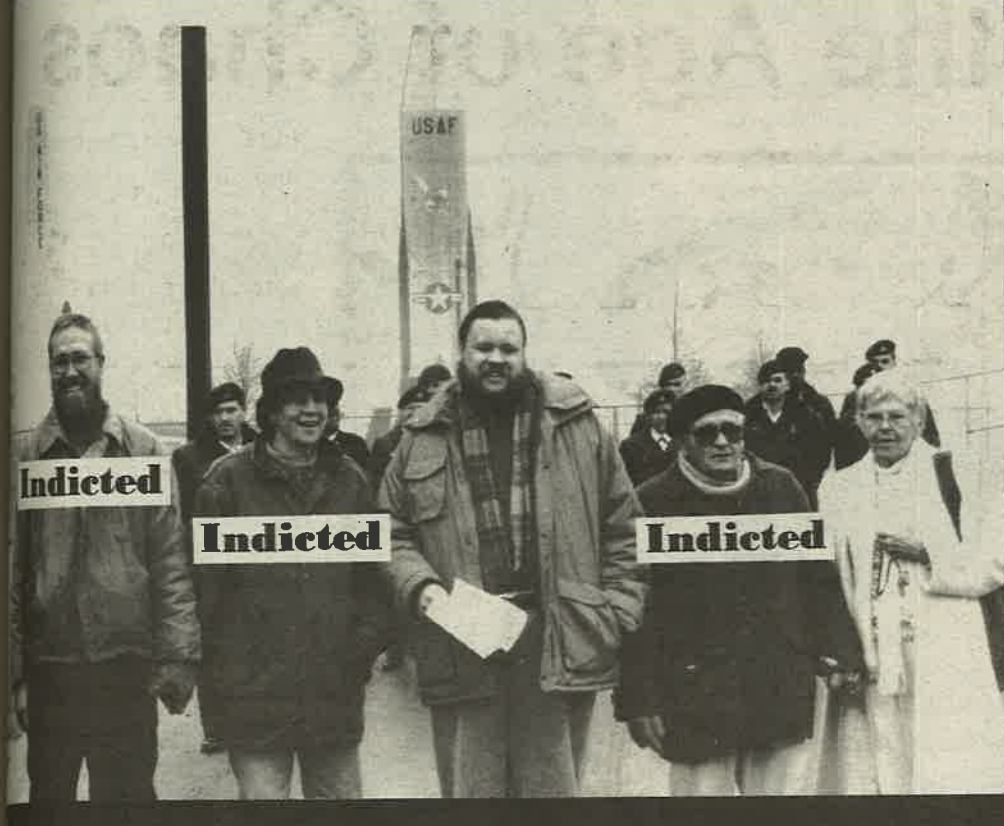
Bill Farmer, Mark Kenney and Kathy Woodward were all ordered to appear in U.S. Magistrate Jaudzemis' courtroom in the Omaha Federal District Courthouse to answer charges of breaking previous "ban and bar" letters from Offutt AFB last December 28.

**Mark Kenney** went to court on Wednesday, June 2. After a trial that last an hour and a half, most of which was spent on procedural concerns, Mark was judged guilty and sentenced to 45 days in jail. Mark is currently in the Douglas County Jail. We are not sure if he will be staying in that jail.

If you wish to write letters of support to Mark and his family, write in care of Marie Kenney, Mark's wife, at 6110 Manderson, Omaha, NE 68104.

**Bill Farmer** pled no contest before the U.S. Magistrate on Monday, June 7. Bill awaits sentencing pending a pre-sentence investigation.

**Kathy Woodward's** whereabouts are unknown as of this writing. The court has issued a warrant for her arrest.



June 20, 1992 line crossers: (from left to right) Mark Kenney, Kathy Woodward, Rev. Jonathan Chadwick, Bill Farmer and Doris Chandler

## From Moratorium To A Comprehensive Test Ban

Following is reprinted from  
South Dakota Sun)

### Good news

Nuclear weapons have been banned by any nation since December 2, 1992, when President Bush signed into law the Partial Test Ban Moratorium. The Russians had led the way with a unilateral moratorium. French Premier Jacques Chirac joined the Russians in April 1992, hoping to entice the world's other nuclear powers to follow suit. Even though the U.S. had already proven itself immune to such arguments, like Reagan before him, both presidents snubbed the Soviet moratorium fervently proffered by Mikhail Gorbachev. Nevertheless, when the Congress passed the moratorium, calling it "highly commendable," Bush did sign it. In signing, he capitulated to a form of blackmail: Congressional leaders had tied the moratorium to an appropriation for the Superconducting Super Collider, a political plum alleged to be worth its weight in 1992 presidential election votes in Texas.

That's how we got to where we are today. The French and British are observing the

moratorium, and both say they'll extend it if we will. The British, who have done all their testing in Nevada (!!!) since Australia evicted them over a decade ago, have had to observe the moratorium, too, since the Nevada Test Site shut down. China, responsible for 2 percent of nearly 2000 nuclear tests conducted since 1945, has made no commitment but is observing a de facto moratorium.

### Bad news-- Moratorium Expires

The U.S. moratorium is set to expire July 1, 1993, with tests to resume at the rate of 5 per year until 1996, when they will cease permanently IF the Russians haven't re-started testing. Ah, there's the Catch 22! Both France and Russia say they will resume if the U.S. does so. The British, grudgingly obliged to suspend tests when the U.S. did, will, presumably, also start up again if we do. China isn't saying, but it would have no motivation to refrain from testing if the other nuclear weapons powers resumed.

### Non-Proliferation Treaty in Jeopardy

If the U.S. were to jump back

into nuclear testing, bringing Russia, China, France, and Britain with it, how can it hope to restrain other nations said to be on the brink of joining the nuclear weapons club--India, Israel, Pakistan, Brazil, and others? Those nations are restrained now by the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), which they signed in 1968 with the USSR, the U.S., and Britain, in return for a commitment from those nuclear powers to negotiate a permanent global ban on all nuclear weapons. We made a similar pledge in the Partial Test Ban (PTB) Treaty of 1963 to "speediest possible achievement" of a Comprehensive Test Ban (CTB) Treaty totally outlawing any nuclear weapons testing whatsoever. The U.S. 30-year failure of progress on that promise must appear to the world as a cynical mockery of a solemn treaty commitment.

The Non-Proliferation Treaty is up for renewal in 1995. How many nations will refuse then to abjure nuclear weapons, citing the failure of existing nuclear powers to live up to their 1963 and 1968 commitments? The U.S. may well trash prospects for NPT renewal in 1995 if it trashes this testing moratorium.

### Congressional Action Holds Hope

Circulating now in Congress are Senate Concurrent Resolution 9 and House Concurrent Resolution 37, asking the President to extend the nuclear test moratorium and initiate multilateral negotiations toward a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty.

Prospects for CTB negotiations are good. In January 1991, representatives of 95 nations convened in New York under United Nations auspices. As parities to the 1963 PTB Treaty, they had

power to begin negotiating an upgrade to a comprehensive test ban--IF they could get the three originators of the PTB to agree. One of the three, the USSR, voted yes; but the U.S. and Britain blocked opening negotiations (the only 2 NO votes among 74 cast; there were 19 abstentions). Nevertheless, the conference ended on a hopeful note with a with a majority vote to reconvene in September 1993.

Thus, timing is ideal for the

President to recoup U.S. moral stature by reversing this nation's 30-year dereliction of its treaty obligations. By positive response to SCR 9/HCR 37, Clinton could achieve advances of historic proportion toward stopping both nuclear weapons proliferation and all nuclear weapons testing. Clinton is on record in favor of resuming tests after July 1 at the 5-per-year rate. His Department of Energy has submitted an FY 94 budget request to cover 5 tests.

### Reasons to Halt Nuclear Testing

☐ **Save lives.** Radiation exposure from nuclear tests to date will cause an estimated 430,000 cancer deaths in this century, according to International Physicians Against Nuclear War (cancer toll of explosions only, exclusive of many more attributable to the full weapons development and deployment cycle). In addition there will be countless lives lost or blighted due to genetic defects, immunosuppression, and other radiation-induced health damage.

☐ **Save environment.** According to a U.S. government report, the majority of "underground" tests have released radiation into the atmosphere. In addition, wildlife are contaminated from drinking radioactive water that seeps to surface water from test caverns.

☐ **Save money.** Direct test costs are about \$0.5 billion/year. With infrastructure costs of Nevada Test Site Operation and other support, yearly costs approach \$2 billion.

☐ **Save Non-Proliferation Treaty, up for renewal in 1995.**

☐ **Advance CTB Treaty.**

☐ **Honor Treaty of Ruby Valley, which was violated when U.S. seized land from the Western Shoshone for the Nevada Test Site.**

☐ **No good reason to resume.** According to many experts, as well as Pentagon testimony before Congress, explosions are not necessary to test electronic reliability or safety components of the weapons. Stopping tests will not impair U.S. retaliatory capability against major nuclear powers or convey any advantage on Third World nations with nuclear ambitions.

☐ **True reasons for test resumption are nasty.** These include development of new first-strike weapons and avoiding "loss of expertise" due to weapons labs teams drifting away to other jobs.





# Des Moines Catholic Worker Needs List

\* We are in desperate need of a mason and/or cash to rebuild the chimney on Lazarus House. The entire structure could be damaged beyond repair if the house is not re-roofed soon. We are unable to complete the roofing job until the chimney is rebuilt. Our best cost estimate for rebuilding the chimney is \$2,500. If you, or someone you know, can donate professional masonry skills or money for this project, contact us at (515) 243-0765. Please send financial contributions to the return address on this newsletter. Than you!

## OTHER NEEDS

Sunshine! - money - floor polish - shampoo/conditioner - razors - feminine hygiene products - bandages - first aid cream - cold medicine (children and adult) - mop bucket with wringer - coffee - fruit juice - board games - garden tools - broom - toothpaste - affordable housing! - love - respect.

*via pacis* - Newsletter of the  
Des Moines Catholic Worker  
P.O. Box 4551  
Des Moines, IA 50306

Address Correction Requested

Send us your change of  
Address before the post office  
does and save us 25 cents

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PAID  
DES MOINES  
PERMIT NO. 4